

MINNESOTA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY BOARD

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

May 17, 2004 ♦ 2:00 pm and 7:00 pm
County Board Room
Scott County Government Center Services Building
200 4th Avenue West
Shakopee, Minnesota

Site Permit and Route Permit Application
by Xcel Energy
Concerning the
Blue Lake Power Generation Plant Expansion Project
In Shakopee, Minnesota

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (EQB) will hold a Public Hearing on an application by Xcel Energy to expand the Blue Lake Generating Plant and construct a new high voltage transmission line about 4000 feet long. The public hearing will be held on **Monday, May 17, 2004**, at the Scott County Government Center, County Board Room, 200 4th Avenue West, Shakopee, Minnesota. The hearing will convene at 2:00 p.m. and an evening session will be held commencing at 7:00 p.m.

Administrative Law Judge Raymond R. Krause will preside at the hearing. Judge Krause's address is Office of Administrative Hearings, 100 Washington Square, Suite 1700, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55401-2138, phone 612.341.7606.

Project Description Xcel proposes to add two, 162-megawatt, simple cycle, natural gas-fired combustion turbine generators at the Blue Lake Generating Plant. As part of this project, Xcel Energy proposes to construct a new segment of double circuit 115/230 kilovolt transmission line, approximately 4000 feet in length, to connect the Blue Lake Substation to an existing 230 kV transmission line that passes south of the Plant site.

Environmental Assessment The EQB is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) on the proposed project. The EA will address the potential impacts of the proposed project and will consider alternative routes for the transmission line. The EA will be available for review at the hearing. Copies of the permit application and other material are available for public review at the Shakopee City Hall. These documents and other project related documents may also be found on the EQB webpage at

<http://www.eqb.state.mn.us/EnergyFacilities/powerplants.html>

Conduct of Hearing The hearing will be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Power Plant Siting Act, Minn. Stat. §§ 116C.51 to 116C.69, and the rules of the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board, Minn. Rules parts 4400.2000 to 4400.2950, for projects of the size and type proposed here.

The EQB staff will be present at the hearing and make a brief presentation about the project and introduce into the record a number of documents relating to the project, including the application, the Environmental Assessment, and certain procedural documents. Representatives of the applicant (Xcel Energy) will be present to offer evidence and to answer questions. Members of the public will have an opportunity to ask questions of EQB staff and Xcel representatives, to make statements, and to offer written comments and material into the record at both the afternoon and evening sessions. Members of the public are not required to file any papers in advance of the hearing in order to participate.

The record will remain open for at least ten days after the close of the hearing for interested persons to submit written comments to the Administrative Law Judge. Judge Krause will determine at the hearing a date for the comment period to end. Comments must be submitted directly to Judge Krause at the address above.

Purpose of Hearing The purpose of the public hearing is to compile the record for the EQB Board to consider in making a final decision on the permits requested. Upon closure of the public comment period, Judge Krause will write a report and make a recommendation to the EQB on which site and route to authorize and on any appropriate permit conditions. The EQB will make a final decision on the permits at a subsequent Board meeting.

Public Utilities Commission Proceeding. In addition to an EQB permit, a certificate of need from the Public Utilities Commission is required for the two new turbines. A public hearing on the question of need will be held in conjunction with the EQB hearing on the permits for the specific site and route for the transmission line. A separate notice for the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) hearing on May 17 before Judge Krause has been provided by the PUC. Additional information about the PUC proceeding is available by contacting David Jacobson, PUC, 121 Seventh Place East, Suite 350, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-2147, 651.297.4562, 1.800.657.3782, 651.297.1200(TTY), 1.800.627.3529(TTY relay service), David.Jacobson@state.mn.us.

Additional Information Questions about the EQB process can be directed to Bill Storm of the EQB staff at 658 Cedar Street, 300 Centennial Building, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155, phone 651.296.9535, e-mail at Bill.Storm@state.mn.us

Mailing List Any person may add his or her name to a mailing list maintained by the EQB for future mailings regarding this project. If you would like to receive notice of the EQB's final decision in this matter, you may put your name on this mailing list. Names can be added to the list by contacting Mr. Storm or electronically by visiting the EQB website:

<http://www.eqb.state.mn.us/EnergyFacilities/index.html>